Beyond the Court Jester: Renée and Barbara's New Love?

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Beyond the Court Jester: Renée and Barbara's New Love?

by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Some time has passed since Renée lost Harleen. She is still in daze about what happened. She is comforted by her best friend and confidante, Barbara, and she begins to realize that their connection might be something more than what thought originally. At the same time, Barbara recognizes the same, but is afraid that if she expresses her feelings it could disrupt the "beautiful friendship" they have between them and deep bonds they have as women.

Notes

I came up with the idea for this fic after seeing the small number of fics for this fandom. I actually liked this series a lot, even as someone who enjoyed "The Batman" (2004-2008) and "Batman: The Animated Series" (1992-1995). I also saw some romantic feelings between them. I know others may not ship them, but I'd say Barbara is just as gay as Renée.

Note: The next fic in the "Aphra's Sapphic Escapade Through the Stars" series is coming out in Friday, I wanted to post this one-shot before then.

Comments are welcome and appreciated.

Update on 5/2/26: An updated/improved version of this fic was published today on Squidge World, with a 111.3% increase from the original though use of articles and adding my own thoughts, plus changing the title to "Beyond the Court Jester: Renée and Barbara's Blossoming Love", changing the coffee shop owner from a man to a woman and adding more to indicate when Renée and Barbara are meeting, their feelings toward one another, and how Renée feels about Harleen, considering what she knows prior to their meeting and learns in the course of the fic itself. The version of that fic was posted on Internet Archive, as was the version of that fic on another fanfic site. Prior to that, the original version of this fic was cross-posted on Squidge World.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by Take Care of Barbie for Me by amageish

Renée still couldn't believe what happened. She had been asked out on a date by Harleen that night, but it ended early. Harleen had told her to meet at a certain spot. But, she *never* showed up. Instead, she got a call from her, saying that she would be leaving town. She didn't know what she had done wrong. Had she done anything wrong at all? Maybe? Everything was all mixed up.

It had been a few weeks since that day. She was unsure what to do. She confided in her best friend, ~~Ms. Gordon~~ Barbara, who she had known for a long time. She was the city's public defender. While sometimes she had to defend despicable people, but she *strongly* believed that everyone deserved, and had the right to, have legal representation. She pulled her aside one day. They met at a local coffee shop that next morning. At the time they arrived, there were very few people there, as they expected. The last thing they wanted was for someone to report them.

"Hey, Barbara, I...keep thinking back to that night...I can't get it out of my head, as hard as I try."

She sighed. She knew that Renée had been through a lot. She wanted to put her friend at ease, even though she had never been through a relationship like hers before.

"You didn't do anything wrong...Harleen did some...questionable things...which are unforgivable."

Renée slightly knew what she meant. She had heard, from Barbara, that Harleen had saved her after her laboratory exploded, and seemed to fall off a cliff, while Batman saved her. However, she didn't know much more than what had been discussed in police reports and around the police headquarters. The reports only noted a destroyed house and not much more of note.

"I know what you told me...but was there something *more* she did?...I thought she was...a good person."

Barbara grumbled. She tried to avoid upseting Renée, so she hadn't told her *everything*. She had carefully talked about what happened. She didn't want to make her friend even more worried and despondent.

"Well...she was my friend...but she experimented on a bunch of people and dressed up like a jester...she even trapped Batman in a tube...and almost killed him"

Renée hadn't heard *that* part. It didn't square with the Harleen she knew. Was the woman she had loved been a lie? Was nothing about her...real? These questions floated around in her head

"What do you mean? You didn't tell me *any* of that! She wouldn't do that...would she?"

Barbara knew she *had* to tell her the full truth. She couldn't hide anything from her best friend. That wasn't right, especially someone who was hurting so much.

"I'm sorry, Renee...I didn't want to hurt you anymore...with everything you were going through...but yes, she did *all* of that. I was *there*. I know. And she called herself 'Harley Quinn' now."

This caught her off guard. She had heard officers in the station talk about *that* woman and how she was partnered with some maniac who called himself 'Joker.' How could she have *ever* been a relationship with a woman like that! Maybe she should just stop dating altogether. Perhaps that was best.

Barbara could tell that her friend was distressed. She couldn't stand to see her like that. She tried to comfort her the best she could.

"It's okay, Renée. No one knew that about Harleen. Don't be too hard on yourself."

She put her hand on Renée's shoulder as she started crying. Tears poured down her face. As she looked up, through her blurred vision (caused by her crying), she saw Barbara's face only inches away. If *more* people had been there, they wouldn't have been this open, but since very few people were there this time of day, they could be more open about their feelings. Otherwise, perhaps, they would have been more reserved.

She never knew that her eyelashes were so beautiful. She'd never seen them this close and almost got lost in her friend's dark brown eyes. She wished she could look at them... forever. *What* was she saying! Why was she thinking about her friend...this way? Then she realized something… did she have a crush… on Barbara? Oh no. This wasn't good.

Little did she know, but Barbara had the *same feelings* bubbling up inside her. She was trying everything she could to hold herself back. She had never seen Renée that close either. She almost was drawn into her friend's eyes too. The last thing she would want was for her friend to see that she was blushing. She would *totally* lose it.

Renée broke up the awkwardness between them which prevented Barbara from embarrassing herself. She looked directly at her friend's dark brown eyes as she spoke.

"Thanks, Barbara. I couldn't have gotten through this without you. I'm so lucky to have someone so talented, beautiful, and smart, standing by me, through thick and thin."

She couldn't believe herself. What was she even saying! She couldn't stop herself as the words flowed right out of her. Barbara couldn't believe it. What the heck was her friend saying? And why? Did she feel the same way?

Before she even thought of it, she blurted out, "Thanks, Renée, I think you are beautiful, smart, and talented too. Who could be a whipsmart police detective but *you*?"

As they laughed about it, Renée tried to remain appreciative. She couldn't lose Barbara. Not now.

"Barbara, thanks for the compliments. You are *such* a dear person to me."

What Barbara said next surprised her, and maybe even herself, as her face started to get even warmer. If anyone else had been there, looking at her, they might have gotten the *wrong idea*. Luckily, the shop was pretty empty this time of day. And the owner didn't care what the patrons did as long as they didn't wreck the place. He was pretty chill about everything.

"Maybe we should get to know each other better...over a drink...you know at a bar...sometime."

Was her friend...asking her out? Renée couldn't believe her ears. Had she heard wrong? She decided to tease her about it.

"Are you sure, Ms. Public Defender? Is going out on a date a...conflict of interest, you know?"

Barbara laughed it off. She *knew* that Renée was messing with her.

"Nah, it isn't, because... my interest is only *you*, Renée Maria Montoya. The only conflict is if *you* don't agree."

She had really said it! It was something she couldn't take back. It was too late for that.

Renée decided to embrace her friend's request. Perhaps she still had some issues with the whole Harleen / Harley thing she had to work out, but Barbara could be something new and fresh, someone who wouldn't abandon her.

"It's fine with me, Barbara. Let's meet this Friday, at the Pussycat Diner, at 7 o'clock...after work."

Barbara smiled. She couldn't be happier. "Sure. Sounds like a date!"

As they both left the coffee shop, she shouted, "see you later, *girlfriend*!" Again, they were lucky that no one said anything to them. Everyone else was so busy with their lives they didn't even notice what she said.

Renée blushed, as she waved and they went their separate ways. In some ways, she couldn't get used to *this*. How could she when she was, *now*, dating a beautiful, smart, and capable woman? It would be different from last time. She wouldn't let what happened with Harleen happen *ever* again.

End Notes

Before finishing this fic, I came across a beautiful fic entitled "Take Care of Barbie for Me" which is the only other fic for this fandom to ship them together! My fic goes a different direction than that one, but their perspective is just as valid! Otherwise, some of the text here is inspired by how R.O.D.: Official Archive describes the romantic feelings between Yomiko Readman and Nancy Makuhari. Continually describing them as close friends… even though it notes elsewhere when a secondary character in R.O.D. the TV has a crush on the protagonist as romantic… it's just annoyed me ever since reading that. Not going to spoil anything for those who haven't watched the Read or Die OVA or R.O.D. the TV, but I will say that their relationship goes further than... a friendship (in my view and views of other critics, fans, etc.) I'm not sure I have their eye colors right, but I think I do? I didn't see anything about that online, so I completely guessed.

Works inspired by this one

Revenge, Pain, and Hard Choices: Renée, Barbara, Harley, and the Batman by lefemmerouge2

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!